

PORTLAND TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 14TH OCTOBER 2015
IN EASTON METHODIST CHURCH HALL (Rearranged Venue)

PRESENT: Councillors R. Wild (Chairman), Ms J. Atwell, Mrs S. Cocking, J. Draper, C. Flack, C. Gover, Ms S. Lees, D. Thurston and Mrs S. West

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Looker (Town Clerk), Cllr. P. Kimber (Dorset County Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council), PS Christine Gould (Dorset Police) and one member of the public.

2966 – PRAYERS

The Clerk led the meeting in prayer.

2967 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs. G. Chadwick, Mrs S. Reynolds and D. Symes, Rev. J. Menzies (Mayor's Chaplain), Cllrs. Penny McCartney and Jason Webb (both Weymouth & Portland Borough Council).

2968 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr. Atwell disclosed an interest in Read Easy, Cllr. Cocking an interest in the Drop In, Easton, both under Agenda Item 17 – Award of Grants, 2015/16.

2969 – OPEN FORUM

a) Police Question Time

Sgt Gould said she had discussed the parking problems in Avalanche Road and Wakeham with Mr Fisher, head of the local traffic wardens.

Cllr. Lees said there was also a parking problem in Straits. In particular issues arose from taxis dropping their clients off at the public house on the corner. Sgt Gould suggested contacting locals through knocking at their doors, leaving cards and organising a street corner meeting to encourage them to devise their own solution.

Cllr. Lees also proposed a weight limit to the vehicles that parked nose-on to the pavement. Cllr. West reported having taken photos of a van parked on the pavement and next to a wall as an alternative way of resolving problems.

Sgt Gould also advised that she had spoken to the companies operating unsheeted stone lorries recently. She reported a malicious fire started in a shed, a local burglary for which a suspect had been arrested and parties occurring in quarries.

Cllr. Gover commented on the widespread lack of parking spaces on the Island and the need to create more. He asked for a council debate on reducing the impact of the deficiency, which the Clerk noted.

Cllr. Thurston commented that many company vehicles were left parked on the road and Cllr. Atwell drew attention to a parked car bearing a "for sale" notice. Sgt Gould

replied that she would ask a PCSO to investigate, try to identify the owners involved from DVLA and whether they might be traders.

Cllr. West asked for the dates of the next street corner meetings, which Sgt Gould said she would notify the Clerk.

b) Public Half-Hour

Mr Rob Hughes asked whether the Council would be issuing a press release about the replacement badge for the Mayor's chain of office. He commented that a valuation would be required for insurance purposes. Mr Hughes also praised the recent Ceremony of the Keys event.

c) Reports from Borough and County Councillors

Regarding an item in Cllr. McCartney's written report Cllr. West said she would be raising the issue associated with the landscaping at Vindelis Way.

Cllr. Kimber encouraged use of the Dorset for You website for information and providing feedback to consultations. He asked for permission to speak on Agenda Item 15 – Youth Services Provision on the Island, which the Chairman granted. He also touched on the complications involved in continuing to provide a youth centre on the Royal Manor site.

Cllr. Kimber turned to political developments in the County, referring to the possibility of Poole, Bournemouth, Christchurch and East Dorset becoming a unitary authority. He also advised of Mr Tom Grainger's willingness to talk about the merger of the Borough with North and West Dorset. Finally he mentioned a new social care organisation was being proposed in Dorset.

Cllr. Flack commented on a surgery for residents which Cllr. Kimber and he had held, when a resident had proposed a cycle way up New Road.

2970 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16TH SEPTEMBER 2015

Cllr. Flack pointed out that in Minute 2961 "206" should have read "2016." With this amendment the minutes were formally approved and signed as a correct record. (For: 9 votes, Against: 0 votes, Abstentions: 0 vote)

2971 – MINUTE UPDATE AND MATTERS ARISING

Minute 2949 (b) – West Weares Clean-up

Cllr. Lees said that with the recent health and safety training she had received she felt competent to carry out risk assessments for clean-ups. She also thought it needed to be established whether the clean-ups organised by Mr Staddon were personal to him or carried out on behalf of the Council.

Cllr. Lees further clarified that an organisation was required to have a health and safety policy when it had more than five employees.

There remains an action on the Clerk to seek out providers of health and safety competency.

2972 – TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr. Wild announced that the date of the Civic Carol Service would be Friday, 18th December 2015.

2973 – WRITTEN QUESTIONS FOR THE MAYOR

There were none.

2974 – FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Payments for Authorisation

RESOLVED – that the schedule of invoices (cheque refs. 3347 - 3364) in the sum of £20,603.33 including VAT be authorised for payment. (9-0-0)

The Clerk undertook to seek reimbursement of the payments for the Mayor's badge and legal expenses.

b) 2015/16 Financial Report to 30 September 2015

RESOLVED – that the report be accepted. (9-0-0)

2975 – HUMAN RESOURCES / IT COMMITTEE, 29TH SEPTEMBER 2015 FINANCE WORKING GROUP MEETING, 30TH SEPTEMBER 2015

2976 – BUDGET AND PRECEPT, 2016/17

The Clerk's joint written report for these two items was accepted, including the Finance Working Group's schedule for this year's budget and precept discussions.

Cllr. Flack reported that all who had attended the budget training course had found it very interesting. He also noted the strong possibility that the discount grant received from the Borough may well dwindle to zero in the next couple of years.

2977 – ANNUAL RETURN, 2014/15

Cllr. Gover thought there was a need for the Finance Working Group to discuss a statement of financial controls.

Cllr. Cocking said the Council should accept more general responsibility for financial matters. She also favoured the introduction of Internet banking as a way of saving time and money.

It was proposed by Cllr. Gover and **RESOLVED** – that the Council implement a statement of financial controls through the Finance Working Group. (9-0-0)

2978 – COUNCIL OFFICES

The Clerk warned the Council that all the indications were that the Borough intended selling the Town Council Offices.

After being given permission to speak Cllr. Kimber said he would request that an item be placed on the Borough Management Committee agenda to discuss the future of the Offices. He also undertook to seek out written agreements about the Offices.

Following further discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Gover and **RESOLVED** – that representatives of the two Councils meet to discuss options for purchase of the building subsequent to refusal of the first offer. If purchase of the building is not appropriate, the Borough should state what it proposes to do about accommodating the Town Council. (9-0-0)

Certain Councillors undertook to explore other possibilities concerning accommodation.

2979 – FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE COUNCIL

After discussion it was agreed that Cllr. Wild obtain information on the Island allotments run by the Borough.

2980 – YOUTH SERVICE PROVISION ON THE ISLAND

Cllr. Kimber spoke of financial cuts to the County's youth provision and identified an emerging problem next September when IPACA moved to the new site at Southwell. At present the building identified as the new youth site was being degaussed. He urged the Council to write to the County to make satisfactory provision for the youth of the Island.

RESOLVED – that a letter be sent to the County requesting satisfactory youth provision on the Island. (9-0-0)

The Clerk was also asked to make it known the difficulty some people had had in completing the County's consultation survey on youth provision.

2981 – CODE OF CONDUCT TRAINING

It was agreed to rearrange training when convenient with the monitoring officer.

2982 – AWARD OF GRANTS, 2015/16

RESOLVED – that the following awards be made:-

Drop In, Portland	£500
Read Easy, Weymouth & Portland	£300

It was agreed that the Clerk should clarify the details of the other applications received before further consideration.

2983 – EASTON PROMISE

Cllr. Cocking provided members with details of this year's event.

It was proposed by Cllr. Thurston and **RESOLVED** – that the Council donate £400 to Easton Promise for this year's Christmas lights. (9-0-0)

It was proposed by Cllr. Cocking and **RESOLVED** – that the Council actively support and get involved in Easton Promise. (9-0-0)

2984 – CHRISTMAS LIGHTS COMPETITION, 2015

It was proposed by Cllr. West and **RESOLVED** – that the Council's Christmas Lights Competition not be held this year. (9-0-0)

2985 – REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND VOLUNTARY POSTS

a) Portland Quarried Liaison Committee

Cllr. Thurston reported that the Stonehills mine area will be restored to grassland once the skylarks have departed. Meanwhile planning permission is being sought for mining at Perryfields. The entrance will be at the foot of a sheer and deep rockface.

Cllr. Wild said that Admiralty Quarry was nearly exhausted for the supply of crushed stone and Bowers Quarry was favoured to replace it. However the County Council was reported not to be happy with the arrangement and therefore the Committee had asked Cllr Kimber to write to persuade a change of mind.

b) Rights Respecting Committee

Cllr. Atwell reported that she had spoken to Chris Briggs about whether the Committee was still functioning, not having received a reply from John Walker.

2986 – DAPTC

Members discussed the five motions put forward by member councils to the AGM in November.

a) From Chideock Parish Council:

“DAPTC requests through NALC that the Department of Communities and Local Government urgently close a loophole caused by the length of time it can often take to ensure Enforcement action takes place. At present long delays by Local Planning Authorities in taking Enforcement action on a planning violation can result in the evidence of the violation, as provided to the LPA by Parish Councils and private individuals, being used by the violator as evidence of existing and prolonged use to support an application for a Certificate of Lawful Use.” **RESOLVED** – to support. (9-0-0)

b) From Chideock Parish Council:

“DAPTC asks NALC to urgently take up the issue of SATNAV systems directing heavy vehicles onto unsuitable roads in rural areas and consequently causing damage and traffic chaos in local communities.” **RESOLVED** – to support. (9-0-0)

c) From Colehill Parish Council:

“The change in electoral legislation which took effect in Parish and Town Council elections this year - under which it was no longer possible to submit nominations for more than one ward and then withdraw from those which have already reached quota after the close of nominations - has caused problems for several councils across Dorset. Elections have been required in some wards, while others have had to be filled by co-option, leading to additional expense and (in some cases) the loss of the Power of General Competence and/or Foundation Status under the Local Council Award Scheme.

Colehill Parish Council proposes that DAPTC requests that NALC and our area MPs lobby government to amend the legislation and remove this impediment to effective local government at the Parish and Town Council level.” **RESOLVED** – to support. (9-0-0)

d) From West Moors Parish Council:

“West Moors Parish Council asks that DAPTC lobbies NALC to change the Localism Act 2011 to be amended so that power is restored to Standards Committees to impose penalties upon Councillors who contravene the Code of Conduct or who are guilty of inappropriate behaviour towards fellow councillors or members of staff.” **RESOLVED** – to support. (9-0-0)

e) From Blandford Forum Town Council:

“DAPTC requests, through NALC, that legislation be amended to ensure that parish meetings/a town assembly can be held at a reasonable time appropriate to its constituents. In addition to holding meetings after 6pm on weekdays, these meetings could be held over weekends.” **RESOLVED** – to support. (9-0-0)

2987 – COUNCILLORS’ NEWS FROM WARDS

Cllr. Lees raised the question of refilling the Council’s grit bins for the winter. The Clerk said he had received from the County a request for our requirements. He therefore would liaise with Cllr. Lees over what was needed.

Cllr. Lees also reported ivy growing over onto the footpath along Southwell Road. A working party led by Working for a Better Portland was being arranged for Sunday, 15th November and Cllr. Lees agreed to advertise it in the Free Portland News.

Cllr. Atwell advised of two complaints she had received from the public about a sudden explosion and the ground shaking. Cllr. Thurston thought it was the last in a series of planned quarry blasts.

2988 – HIRE OF COUNCIL OFFICES

The Clerk gave details of two unsolicited requests he had received in recent months to hire the Council Chamber, the first of their kind that had come his way. He had accepted both and he informed members of the charges made. Essentially he was seeking guidance from the Council on establishing some form of policy in dealing with these requests. The Council agreed that he should carry on in like manner without actively seeking to advertise the facilities.

2989 – EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

RESOLVED – that pursuant to the provisions of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for Agenda Item 24 – Freedom of the Island by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

2990 – FREEDOM OF THE ISLAND

From the chair Cllr. Wild explained his proposal for granting the freedom of the Island to the officers and sea cadets of TS PENN and the reasons why they were worthy of the honour. Cllrs. Flack and Thurston both declared an interest and did not take part in the subsequent vote.

It was proposed by Cllr. Wild and **RESOLVED** – that the freedom of the Island be granted to TS PENN, with a suitable award ceremony to follow. (7-0-0)

It was further agreed that Cllr. Wild write to the Queen informing her of the Council's decision. The Events Working Group would help in the organisation of the event.

2991 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is due to take place on Wednesday, 18th November 2015, starting at 7.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 10.10 pm.

Signed Dated.....
(Chair)